

# *The Cherry Tree*

*USS George Washington (CVN 73)*

*Command Ombudsman Newsletter*

*July 2006*



## Vice President's Wife Visits GW

see story page 3



# News You Can Use ...

## Changing Ports or, Moving Again?

This doesn't have to be such a dreaded experience.

The most important thing to remember is to have a positive attitude. We all know that moving can be stressful. It can have a financial impact as well. The best way to get ready for a move is be prepared. Have a plan! There is plenty of help out there to make your move smooth. Get a SITES package. to find out about your next base before you get there.

The SITES program will provide general relocation guidance and helpful tips. It will connect you with the best resources to meet your needs. It will give you information on schools, jobs, housing prices shipping/food nearby towns, transportation etc..

To get a SITES package, call the Fleet and Family Support location where you are going or go to [www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites) to receive a copy.

Also, contact your personal property office to find out what best accommodates you and your needs. There are all kinds of things that will need to be done in order to make your move happen. Finding out what they are and making sure you get each and every one of them done will make your move that much better.

Any way you look at it moving is not an easy process but you can make it less stressful by being prepared. Below you will find some other useful links that might help you with your move as well as just some good web site to have.

Personal property office-look for the PPO link- [www.nor.fisc.navy.mil](http://www.nor.fisc.navy.mil)

Finance -Relocation - [www.military.com](http://www.military.com)

Naval Station Norfolk web page - [www.navstanorva.navy.mil/](http://www.navstanorva.navy.mil/)

Education, career, and financial aid center - [www.vtc.odu.edu/eoc.html](http://www.vtc.odu.edu/eoc.html)

Commissary - [www.commissaries.com/](http://www.commissaries.com/)

Navy Exchange - [www.navy-nex.com/](http://www.navy-nex.com/)

Tri-care - [www.tricare.osd.mil/](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/) or [www.sierramilitary.com](http://www.sierramilitary.com)

Tri-care dental program - [www.ucci.com/](http://www.ucci.com/)

MWR - [www.mwr.navy.mil/](http://www.mwr.navy.mil/)

Navy Marine Corps Relief Society - [www.nmcrcs.org/](http://www.nmcrcs.org/)

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors - [www.taps.org/](http://www.taps.org/)

## We Want to Hear From You

Is there something you would like to see in the news letter? Do you have a favorite recipe that you would like to share? Do you have any information that you think would benefit our sailor's families?

If so please email [georgewnewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:georgewnewsletter@yahoo.com) . We are going to try something new and provide questions and answers from our readers. We might also try a section for some favorite recipes of the season depending on the response.

Keep a watch on upcoming letters to see your ideas.

## Public School Registration & Information

**Chesapeake Public schools**

<http://eclipse.cps.k12.va.us/>

757-482-1221

**Gloucester Public Schools**

<http://gets.gc.k12.va.us>

804-693-5300

**Hampton Public Schools**

<http://www.sbo.hampton.k12.va.us>

757-727-2000

**Isle of Wright County Schools**

<http://www.iwcs.k12.va.us>

757-357-4393

**Newport News Public Schools**

<http://www.sbo.nn.k12.va.us>

757-591-4545

**Norfolk Public Schools**

<http://www.nps.k12.va.us>

757-628-3830

**Portsmouth City Public Schools**

<http://pps.k12.va.us>

757-393-8751

**Poquoson City Public Schools**

<http://www.sbo.poquoson.k12.va.us>

757-868-3055

**Suffolk Public Schools**

<http://www.sps.k12.va.us>

757-925-6750

**Virginia Beach Public Schools**

<http://vbschools.com>

757-263-1000

**Williamsburg-James City County**

<http://www.wjcc.k12.va.us>

757-253-6777

**York County School Division**

<http://www.yorkcountyschools.org>

757-893-0300

## GW Ombudsmen

TAMARA (757) 544-0397

STEPHANIE (757) 289-0530

SHERRI (757) 289-0534

**The Cherry Tree** is an authorized publication for the families serving aboard **USS George Washington** (CVN 73). Contents herein are not the views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy, or the commanding officer of **USS George Washington**.

COMMANDING OFFICER

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON CVN 73

BOX 1

FPO AE 09550-2873

[www.spear.navy.mil/gw/](http://www.spear.navy.mil/gw/)

We-Care Line 444-0460

Out of the area 1-800-372-5463

**Commanding Officer**

CAPT Garry White

**Executive Officer**

CAPT Kent Whalen

**Command Master Chief**

CMDMCM(SW) David Rudd

# GW Hosts Family Day, Lynne Cheney Book Reading

By MCC (SW/AW/IUSS) Henry W. Rice, USS George Washington Public Affairs

NORFOLK (NNS) -- USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) hosted a "Family Day" June 10, which included a visit by Lynne Cheney, bestselling author and wife of Vice President Richard B. Cheney.

More than 500 Sailors and family members were aboard for the event. Cheney read and talked about her book, "When Washington Crossed the Delaware: A Wintertime Story for Young Patriots," in an effort to promote historical literacy and to discuss the values displayed by the ship's namesake, George Washington.

"It was an amazing privilege to be here, and I congratulate all the people on *George Washington* who put this great event together," said Cheney. "I know that we honor our fighting men and women, but we also need to honor the families who stay strong for them when they are gone, and an event like this one today does just that."

Joyce White, wife of *GW*'s commanding officer Capt. Garry White, was interested in having Cheney visit the ship after seeing the book on display at the George Washington birthday celebration event at Mt. Vernon in 2005. She worked with Gay Gaines, the regent of the Mt. Vernon Ladies Association of the Union, to invite Cheney.

"When I saw the book, I thought it would be an interesting way to bring George Washington to the ship," said Mrs. White. "He was so inspirational,



and I thought it would be a great educational experience for the children."

More than 200 children gathered around Cheney as she talked about history, read parts of the book and took questions about writing the book, George Washington, and being the vice president's wife.

"It was a glorious day," said Mrs. White. "Mrs. Cheney had a magical rapport with the children, and they really responded well to her. They were very attentive and they asked questions. It was just wonderful."

The *GW* enlisted and officers spouse support groups donated \$1,000 to help offset the cost of the book, which was sold to crew members and their families by the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation office. Three hundred books were sold at a reduced price and given out following Cheney's visit.

"The *GW*'s spouse support groups work extremely hard and they do not get paid," said Mrs. White. "There were many meetings, discussions and behind-the-scenes work leading up to family day, and the Mrs. Cheney visit and the

spouses really deserve the credit for this highly successful event."

The other Family Day events aboard *GW* included a walking tour of the ship, departmental displays, and children activities in the hangar bays.

"The family day event with Mrs. Cheney was a tremendous success due to the efforts of the support groups, families and the entire *GW* crew," said White. "Our goal was to instill the values of our namesake, George Washington, into all members of the *GW* family, specifically our youngest family members. Mrs. Cheney's rapport with the children helped immeasurably to do that."

In addition to departmental displays in the hangar bay, the ship opened more than 30 spaces on the ship for guests to tour. They included the combat direction center, air operations office, medical and dental facilities, arresting gear and catapult launching equipment rooms, and the bridge.

"Having Mrs. Cheney here this morning was great, and it went a long way to instill pride and an understanding of what the military family stands for," said Nicolann Miller, president of *GW*'s Enlisted Spouses Support Group. "It shows that our country cares about us, and I am grateful for that."





# GW Hosts Naturalization Ceremony

By MC2(SW) Katherine Favell, USS George Washington Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) hosted a naturalization ceremony for 146 service members in the hangar bay, June 14.

Friends and family looked on as members of the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard became U.S. citizens.

The U.S. Atlantic Fleet Band entertained attendees before the ceremony and performed both the national anthem and "God Bless America" during the proceedings.

Aviation Machinist's Mate 2nd Class (AW) Elmer Rayos, a native of Manila, Philippines, and a *GW* crew member, was among the service members naturalized.

"It feels great," said Rayos. "I'm especially honored to give the oath on board my own ship and to represent *GW* in such an important event."

Capt. Garry White, *GW*'s commanding officer, made opening remarks for the ceremony applauding the service members on their achievement.

"This was the first ceremony of this type I've participated in, and it was truly an honor to take part in welcoming 50 nations whose former members have become part of the United States of America," White said. "This was a very emotional and moving ceremony."

In addition to White, the official party was comprised of Dr. Emilio Gonzalez, director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Alfonso Aguilar, chief of the Office of Citizenship for USCIS, Rear Adm. Denby Starling, commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic



Fleet, and Phyllis Howard, USCIS district director.

Gonzalez delivered the keynote address and performed the swearing-in by delivering the oath of citizenship. He presented all 146 candidates individually with their certificates of citizenship and personally congratulated them with handshakes and words of well wishes.

"Being able to naturalize all of you here today is a great honor. You've definitely earned your right to be here, standing tall as equal Americans," Gonzalez said. "I take this privilege very, very seriously."

"We are all blessed to be a part of this great nation," White said. "For what many of us who were born in the United States

often take for granted, they have had to work hard to attain, not only through the process of becoming naturalized citizens, but by taking on the added responsibility of defending America against all who would do her harm."

To conclude the ceremony, a video message played from President George W. Bush, welcoming newly-naturalized citizens.

"For all of you, the oath of citizenship is more than a formality. And today, America is more than your home; it's your country," said Bush. "This is one of the things that make our country so unique. With a single oath, all at once you become as fully American as the most direct descendant of a founding father."

## Working Group Looks at GW's Fitness Programs

By MCC(SW/AW/IUSS) Henry W. Rice, USS George Washington Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- A working group from the Navy's Personal and Family Readiness Program (PFRP) visited USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) June 26 for a briefing on the command's fitness program and to evaluate the fitness resources on an aircraft carrier.

The group included Rear Adm. Jamie Barnett, director, Naval Education and Training Division (N17) on the staff of the Chief of Naval Personnel and representatives from the Navy Bureau of Medicine, Bureau of Personnel, U.S. 2nd Fleet and IBM.

"This group is working to implement and improve the programs that impact physical wellness," said Lt. Jacqueline Pollock, *GW*'s special assistant for fitness. "They were on board to hear how we ran our programs and what resources are available to Sailors on an operational asset."

During their visit, the group heard about the command's fitness program as it relates to the physical fitness assessment (PFA), body composition assessment (BCA) and fitness enhancement program (FEP). Pollock explained to the group the procedures used to ensure accurate measurements and testing procedures. Pollock also told the group about *GW*'s more than 50 fitness classes held aboard the ship and many other initiatives when it comes to wellness, like healthier choices in the galleys, stores and vending machines.

"We wanted to show them the resources we use in our program and show that we are serious about fitness, but more importantly, we care

see "FITNESS" on page 5

# GW Carrier Strike Group Changes Command

By MC3 Michael D. Blackwell, USS George Washington Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) - Rear Adm. William E. Gortney assumed command as commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10, relieving Rear Adm. Joseph F. Kilkenny July 10, during a ceremony aboard USS *George Washington* (CVN 73).

Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet Vice Adm. Mark P. Fitzgerald was the guest speaker during the ceremony. During Fitzgerald's speech, he commended Kilkenny for a job well done.

"Adm. Kilkenny has done every job he has had superbly, and he has been setting the standard for carrier aviation for a long time," said Fitzgerald. "He and his family have been true supporters of the Navy for a very long time."

Fitzgerald then commented on the role Carrier Strike Group 10 has played in the war on terrorism.

"We are a credible and powerful Navy, and a persistent force sailing the oceans of the world and giving stability to those areas that don't necessarily conform to our way of thinking and democracy," Fitzgerald said. "Some people say virtual presence is actual absence, and I think that's true today. We have to be out there showing values and the things that the United States brings to this world."

Fitzgerald then presented Kilkenny with the Legion of Merit Award for his service while commanding the *George Washington*



Carrier Strike Group.

"Serving as commander of CSG 10 has been without a doubt the most rewarding tour of my career," said Kilkenny. "I've been blessed with the opportunity to command some of the finest Sailors in our fleet, and I can assure you they have all been truly magnificent in answering their call to duty."

Kilkenny was then relieved by Gortney.

"I can guarantee that we'll be properly manned, we will be trained and equipped for both high- and low-end conflicts. We will dominate any battle space

we're assigned, support and train with our allies, make as many new friends as able, do everything in our power to prevent major combat, and support our nation during operations over seas," said Gortney.

Gortney previously served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Global Force Management and Joint Operations, Fleet Forces Command, in Norfolk, Va.

Kilkenny, who assumed command of CSG 10 April 8, 2005, also served as the Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander for hurricanes Katrina and Rita Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief operations. He began his tenure with *George Washington* Strike Group in December 2005 when the ship became the CSG 10 flagship.

Kilkenny will now assume command as Commander, Navy Recruiting Command.

## "FITNESS" from page 4 ...

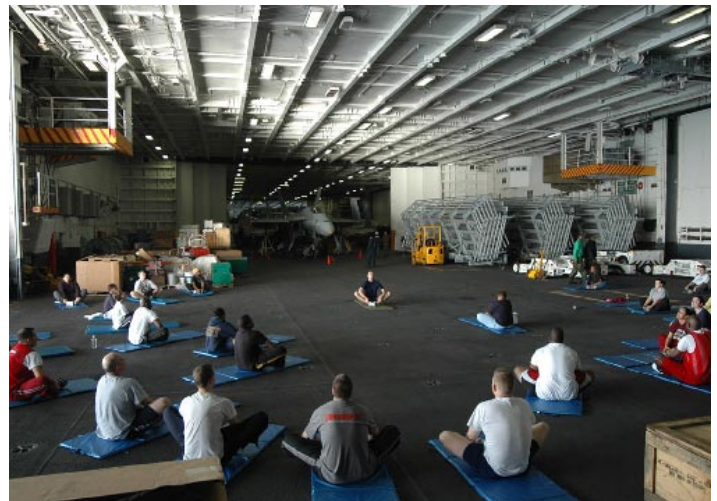
about the Sailors' well-being," said Pollock. "We talked about our policies and procedures and were able to share with them our secrets of our success that we hope they will take with them and share with the fleet."

GW's fitness program has shown improvement over the last two years. Since 2004, PFA failures are down more than 75 percent and BCA failures have fallen by approximately 50 percent. Pollock is most proud of another number.

"In the last two years, we have had about 450 Sailors who needed to pass the PFA or the BCA or risk being separated from the Navy," Pollock explained. "The GW fitness team has been able to save two-thirds of those Sailors, and allowed them to continue on their career. I think that is awesome."

The group was impressed with all the resources GW has for Sailors to use when it comes to healthy choices and fitness options. But the key to GW's success, according to Pollock, is leadership. She said the culture of fitness aboard GW starts with the Commanding Officer, Capt. Garry White, and is supported by every level of the chain of command in every department on the ship.

"USS *George Washington* demonstrates daily that leadership focus on fitness will create a culture of fitness," said Barnett. "At all levels, leadership is the first and essential ingredient. We will take GW's successes, and those of other commands, back to see how we can institute this culture across the Navy. In addition to leadership at the command and master chief level, we need to make sure that Big Navy is providing the tools that leaders need to make the culture of fitness a reality."





# GW Celebrates Birthday of Nation, Ship

*By MC2(SW/AW) Jennifer Crowell, USS George Washington Public Affairs*

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) Sailors gathered for a ceremony on the flight deck, June 30, to commemorate the nation's 230th, and the ship's 14th birthday.

Capt. Kent Whalen, *GW*'s executive officer, was on hand as Sailors showed their appreciation to America and reaffirmed their dedication to traditions established by our founding fathers in 1776.

"Independence Day recognizes everyone, civilian and military alike, who has contributed to making the United States what it is today," said Chief Hull Technician (SW/AW) Jaymond Calmes, *GW*'s History and Heritage Committee coordinator.

During the ceremony, Electrician's Mate 1st Class Michael McKinley read the account of the life and times of the ship's namesake, Gen. George Washington.

"I'm here making sure everyone at home can sleep at night while I stand watch," said McKinley. "I'm here to make sure we can remain a free nation."

"It's an honor to serve aboard this ship," said Chief Religious Programs Specialist (SW) Edward Snyder, master of ceremonies for the event. "This is a ship named after the first president of our country, and as I was standing there listening to everyone reading, I felt this ship is a part of American history."

Later in the day, a cake-cutting ceremony was held on the mess decks for all hands to bring the event to a close.



## GW Returns to Norfolk After Completing CQs, TCQs

*By MC1(SW) Rebecca A. Perron, USS George Washington Public Affairs*

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) returned to Norfolk Naval Station July 24, after spending two weeks at sea completing carrier qualifications (CQ) and training carrier qualifications (TCQ) for several squadrons, as well as a number of training requirements for the crew.

This was one of *GW*'s last scheduled underways before heading to Norfolk Naval Shipyard in the fall for a Docked Planned Incremental Availability in preparation for the ship's reassignment to Japan.

"We were able to accomplish an incredible amount of training for such a short time at sea," said Capt. Garry R. White, *GW*'s

commanding officer. "From the work we did to help pilots earn their carrier qualifications to the training we did for our own crew, we're coming home with a tremendous sense of achievement."

"It's rare that we're able to qualify 100 percent of the pilots during a TCQ period," White added. "We're very proud to have been a part of developing the future of naval aviation."

*GW* also provided training for various reserve groups in fields such as basic seamanship, weapons handling and engineering, as well as Flight Deck Battle Dress Station training for several hospital corpsmen cross-decking from USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) while Truman is in the yards.

For Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Tracy Adjip, the training she received from *GW*'s medical department is essential for *Truman*.

"All the flight deck qualified personnel in our department have transferred," Adjip said. "We will be the primary trainers when we get back."

Although *GW* is headed to the yards later this year, training continues to be an important agenda item for everyone. During the past two weeks the crew conducted general quarters, medical emergency, at-sea fire party and deep void rescue drills.

"Training is important because we have to continue thinking about saving the ship," said Lt. Cmdr. Michelle Carter, *GW*'s training officer. "We are also looking at manning requirements to see who will be here when we come out of the yards. We need to make sure our Sailors have the right skills so we are ready to go to Japan."

"Training will never go away," Carter added. "It's not something you can pick up and put down. It's something you have to think about every day you're on the ship."



# GW Shows Off Fitness Level Through PT Competition

*By MCSN(SW/AW) Najah M. Stanford, USS George Washington Public Affairs*

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, At Sea (NNS) -- USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) held a three-hour "PT till you Stop" physical training (PT) competition in Hangar Bay 2 July 21.

During the competition, more than 400 Sailors from all departments were challenged in kick boxing, cardio, body sculpting and military-style workouts.



"The workout lasted about two and half hours, but it felt like four hours," said Air Traffic Controller 2nd Class (AW/SW) Bethany Hamilton, a command fitness leader (CFL) aboard *GW*.

In order to eliminate participants, fitness instructors started with cardio-kickboxing, being the most strenuous workout, and then ended with the more difficult strength training, such as push ups.

"I have been a fitness leader for a year and a half, and I was tired," said Hamilton.

The CFLs aboard *GW* are highly trained fitness instructors. They attend a course at the Navy Environmental Health Center where they

learn techniques like strength yoga and aerobics.

CFLs are also trained in injury prevention, nutrition and specific techniques for their classes to target weight loss, body strengthening and body sculpting.

"Our CFLs are dedicated to their jobs, especially when it comes to motivating their shipmates to work out," said Lt. j.g. Rebecca Shea, Training Department's assistant division officer.

There are more than 85 CFLs aboard, usually one from each department and one from each division.

During the competition, the CFLs kept watch over the participants, making sure they were doing the exercises properly and safely.

"After the first cardio event of the competition, the CFLs noticed not one Sailor dropped out," said Chief Air Traffic Controlman (AW/SW) Pablo Rosado, Operations Department command fitness leader and OC division LCPO. "We knew we were in trouble."

After the two and a half hour workout session, four participants were left.

The four winners were Master Chief Storekeeper (SW/AW) Kristina Lasher of Supply Department, Chief Legalman (SW/SCW) Therine Walz of Legal Department, and Torpedoman's Mate 1st Class Jackie Murphy and Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class (SW) Robert Hock of Deck Department.

"This was a great morale booster for the Sailors on board," Lasher said. "Getting first place shows you can do anything you put your mind to."

"Lt. Pollock and the command fitness leaders led a challenging, fun, and thorough, meticulous orchestration, a very safe event," said Capt. Garry R. White, *GW*'s commanding officer. "We will be doing this again!"

The first place winner was awarded a \$100 gift certificate to the Navy Exchange, and the second place winner was awarded a \$50 gift certificate to the Navy Exchange.

"I had this vision of a ship wide PT competition since the beginning of our last cruise," Rosado said. "I am so happy and thankful the event had such a good turn out."

## GW Announces 15 Newly Advanced Sailors Through CAP

*By MCSN Laura L. Rabe, USS George Washington Public Affairs*

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, At Sea (NNS) -- USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) announced 15 selections for the Command Advancement Program (CAP) July 15, during an advancement ceremony on the ship's television system.

"CAP is a Navy program that gives commanding officers at sea the ability to advance people," said Command Master Chief (SW) David Rudd. "It's a program that's in place for the captain to advance a number of people on the ship to recognize them for their hard work and dedication to the mission. It's for people who aren't good test takers; they're in rates that are very hard to advance."

The decisions are made through a process beginning at the leading chief petty officer level.

"Everyone puts in at least their number one candidate, along with packages about what

they've done on the ship," said Rudd. "There were some Sailors who were very close on this board and will be good candidates for the next one."

One crew member, Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuels) 1st Class (AW/SW) Jonathan Dozier of air department's V-4 division was selected for advancement to first class petty officer.

The seconds classes were: Electronics Technician 2nd Class Brian Collette of combat system's CS-6 division, Storekeeper 2nd Class (SW/AW) Tiffany Crossley of supply's S-8 division and Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class (SW/AW) Rene Reyna of deck department's 1st division.

The third classes were: Aviation Support Equipmentman 3rd Class Mulugeta Addisie of Aviation Intermediate Maintenance

Department's IM-4 division, Quartermaster 3rd Class Timothy Agard of navigation department, Damage Controlman 3rd Class Bridget Cowne of engineering's DC division, Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Charles Hall of reactor's RP division, Personnel Specialist 3rd Class (SW/AW) Arthur Hernandez of Admin's X-2 division, Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class (AW/SW) Antoinette Ingram of air's V-1 division, Aviation Warfare Systems Operator 3rd Class (AW/SW) Robert Molano of operation's OM division, Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Rex Nelson of media department, Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class Jennifer Pinkston of weapon's G-1 division, Culinary Specialist 3rd Class David Dykes of supply's S-5 division and Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Lisa Pantenge of deck's 2nd division.